

IN THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listing of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) A lightweight hanger spacer for use with a plurality of hangers having respective necks comprising a unitary body of a single layer of material selected from the group consisting of cardboard and plastic extending along a longitudinal axis, the body having opposite first and second surfaces and being free of folds, the body being provided with a plurality of longitudinally spaced-apart circumferentially-closed holes extending through the single layer of material between the opposite first and second surfaces adapted for slidably receiving the respective necks of the plurality of hangers whereby the circumferentially-closed holes retain the necks of the plurality of hangers within the holes during transport and the spacing of the hangers by the body inhibits wrinkling of garments carried by the hangers.

2. (previously presented) The hanger spacer of Claim 41 wherein the first and second portions are bendable relative to each other.

3. (previously presented) The hanger spacer of Claim 1 wherein the body is made from cardboard.

4. (previously presented) The hanger spacer of Claim 41 wherein the body has a crease in the cardboard between the first and second portions for facilitating bending of the first and second portions relative to each other.

5. (previously presented) The hanger spacer of Claim 1 wherein the body is made from plastic.

6. (withdrawn) The hanger spacer of Claim 41 wherein the first and second portions meet at an edge and each extend downwardly from the edge towards the hangers.

Claim 7 (cancelled)

8. (currently amended) The hanger spacer of Claim 6 wherein the longitudinal axis is a longitudinal centerline and wherein the edge extends along the longitudinal centerline and the ~~openings~~holes are spaced along the longitudinal centerline.

Claims 9-10 (cancelled)

11. (currently amended) A lightweight hanger spacer for use with a plurality of hangers having respective hooks and adjoining necks comprising a unitary body of a single layer of nonmetallic material, the body being free of folds and having a substantially planar central portion and opposite first and second side portions inclined at respective angles relative to the central portion, the central portion having opposite first and second surfaces and a longitudinal axis, the central portion being provided with a plurality of longitudinally spaced-apart circumferentially-closed holes extending through the single layer of material between the opposite first and second surfaces adapted for ~~slidably~~threadedly receiving the respective hooks and adjoining necks of the plurality of hangers whereby the circumferentially-closed holes retain the necks of the plurality of hangers within the holes and the first and second side portions provide rigidity to the body during transport and the spacing of the hangers by the central portion inhibits wrinkling of garments carried by the hangers.

12. (previously presented) The hanger spacer of Claim 11 wherein the body is made from cardboard.

13. (previously presented) The hanger spacer of Claim 11 wherein the body has a crease between the central portion and each of the first and second side portions for facilitating bending of the side portions relative to the central portion.

14. (previously presented) The hanger spacer of Claim 11 wherein the central portion has opposite first and second side edges, the first and second side portions being joined to the central portion at respective first and second side edges.

15. (previously presented) The hanger spacer of Claim 14 wherein the opposite first and second side edges extend parallel to the longitudinal axis.

16. (previously presented) The hanger spacer of Claim 11 wherein the first and second side portions are each inclined at an angle less than 180° relative to the first surface of the central portion.

17. (previously presented) The hanger spacer of Claim 16 wherein the first and second side portions are each inclined at an angle of approximately 90° relative to the first surface of the central portion.

Claims 18-24 (cancelled)

25. (currently amended) An assembly comprising a plurality of hangers having respective necks, a plurality of garments respectively carried by the plurality of hangers, a unitary spacer extending along a longitudinal axis, the spacer having opposite first and second surfaces and being provided with a plurality of longitudinally spaced-apart circumferentially-closed holes extending between the opposite first and second surfaces for ~~slidably~~ receiving the respective necks of the plurality of hangers, the spacer resting on at least some of the garments and hangers so as to be carried by at least some of the garments and hangers whereby the circumferentially-closed holes retain the necks of the plurality of hangers within the holes during transport and the spacing of the hangers by the spacer inhibits wrinkling of the garments.

26. (previously presented) The assembly of Claim 25 wherein the spacer is provided with first and second longitudinally-extending portions inclined at an angle relative to each other for providing rigidity to the spacer.

27. (withdrawn) The assembly of Claim 26 wherein the first and second portions meet at an edge and each extend downwardly from the edge towards the hangers.

28. (previously presented) The assembly of Claim 25 wherein the spacer is made from cardboard.

29. (previously presented) The assembly of Claim 25 further comprising a tie extending through the necks above the spacer and having first and second ends that can be tied together whereby the tie precludes the hangers from undesirably separating from the spacer.

30. (original) The assembly of Claim 29 wherein the tie includes a flexible wire.

Claims 31-36 (cancelled)

37. (previously presented) The hanger spacer of Claim 1 wherein the body is provided with a single set of a plurality of longitudinally spaced-apart holes extending through the single layer of material between the opposite first and second surfaces.

38. (previously presented) The hanger spacer of Claim 11 wherein the central portion is provided with a single set of a plurality of longitudinally spaced-apart holes extending through the single layer of material between the opposite first and second surfaces.

39. (previously presented) The assembly of Claim 25 wherein the spacer is formed from a single layer of material and is provided with a plurality of longitudinally spaced-apart holes extending through the single layer of material between the opposite first and second surfaces.

40. (previously presented) The assembly of Claim 39 wherein the spacer is provided with a single set of a plurality of longitudinally spaced-apart holes extending through the single layer of material between the opposite first and second surfaces.

41. (previously presented) The hanger spacer of Claim 1 wherein the body has first and second longitudinally-extending portions inclined at an angle relative to each other whereby the inclination of the first and second portions relative to each other provides rigidity to the body.